

- Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights Ends Industry Abuses and Improves Consumer Protections - Poughkeepsie, NY – With Americans owing almost \$1 trillion in credit card debt, U.S. Rep. John Hall (D-NY19) announced legislation today he's supporting in Congress called the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights that would reform major credit card industry abuses and improve consumer protections. "Too many people are falling into traps set by credit card companies that result in hidden fees and interest rates that skyrocket for no apparent reason," said Hall. "The supposed contract that exists between a credit card holder and a credit card company has become completely one-sided and the consumer is getting the short end of the stick."

In an effort to boost the economy, the Federal Reserve has cut interest rates, yet credit card companies continue to raise rates on cardholders. Numerous unfair and deceptive practices exist in the credit card industry including:

- Raising interest rates on existing balances – even to cardholders who pay on time and never go over their credit limit
- Charging interest on balances that have already been paid off
- Marketing fee-heavy subprime credit cards to unsuspecting customers
- Unfairly allocating payments to make it difficult for cardholders to pay off higher interest rate balances

"Before Americans fall into further debt, Congress needs to take action now to reform these credit card industry abuses," said Hall. The Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights (H.R. 5244):

- Requires card companies to give cardholders advance notice of an interest rate hike
- Stops tricks and traps that make cardholders incur rate hikes and pricey fees
- Gives cardholders more control over their credit limits
- Gives cardholders the right to say they don't want to borrow money at a rate higher than they originally agreed to
- Stops tricks and traps that make cardholders incur rate hikes and pricey fees
- Empowers cardholders to set limits on their credit
- Shields cardholders from misleading terms
- Protects vulnerable consumers from fee-heavy subprime cards
- Requires Congress to provide better oversight of the credit card industry